

REMARKS

This amendment and these remarks are responsive to the final Office action dated June 12, 2006.

Claims:

In the Office action, claims 1-11, 14, 16 and 18-27 are rejected. Specifically, 1, 14, and 25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Siiman et al. Claims 2-10 and 27 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Siiman et al., in view of Wilding. Claims 22 and 23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Siiman et al., in view of Mian et al. Claims 18-21, 24, and 26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Siiman et al in view of Kraus. Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections. However, by way of the present amendment, claims 1-11, 14, 16, and 18-27 are cancelled without prejudice to further prosecution in this or a related application. Such cancellation has been made to prosecute claims which are believed to more clearly define an aspect of applicant's invention and are not necessarily made because applicant agrees with the Examiner's grounds for rejection. Because applicant has cancelled claims 1-11, 14, 16, and 18-27 applicant believes the ground for rejecting these claims is moot.

New claims:

New claims 54-73 have been added. New claims 54-73 are believed to be patentable over the art cited in the previous Office actions. Specifically, it is believed that the limitations of claims 54-73 are not taught by Siiman or any of the other cited references. As a specific, though not necessarily only, example, new claim 54 recites a first population of beads immobilized with a first region of the column...[and] a second population of beads immobilized within a second region of the column...where the first and second regions are distinct from each other. Neither

Siiman nor any of the other cited references teach first and second populations of beads immobilized in distinct regions of a column in combination with the other recited limitations of the claim. Accordingly, for at least this reason, it is believed that claim 54, as well as claims 55-62, which depend from claim 54, are patentable over the cited references.

With regard to new claim 63, claim 63 recites "a first population of beads...[and] a second population of beads arranged within the microfluidic channel such that an analyte introduced into the microfluidic device is initially exposed to the first population of beads and then subsequently exposed to the second population of beads." Neither Siiman nor any of the other cited references teach populations of beads such that an analyte introduced into the microfluidic device is initially exposed to the first population and then subsequently exposed to the second population in combination with the other recited limitations of the claim. Accordingly, for at least this reason, it is believed that claim 63, as well as claims 64-68, which depend from claim 63, are patentable over the cited references.

New claim 69 recites a first population of beads immobilized with a first location in the column...[and] a second population of beads immobilized within a second, distinct, location in the column. Neither Siiman nor any of the other cited references teach first and second populations of beads immobilized in distinct locations of a column in combination with the other recited limitations of the claim. Accordingly, for at least this reason, it is believed that claim 54, as well as claims 55-62, which depend from claim 54, are patentable over the cited references.

Conclusion:

Applicant believes that this application is now in condition for allowance, in view of the above amendments and remarks. Accordingly, applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner

issue a Notice of Allowability covering the pending claims. If the Examiner has any questions, or if a telephone interview would in any way advance prosecution of the application, the Examiner is requested to please contact the undersigned attorney of record.


CERTIFICATE OF TRANSMISSION

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being transmitted to the USPTO via secure EFS on October 12, 2006


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Respectfully submitted,

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